

## Message Text

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47

ACTION EB-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 NEA-06 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

USIE-00 IO-04 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 CAB-02 COME-00

DOT-00 FAA-00 ACDA-05 SAM-01 SAJ-01 /069 W

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O R 301400Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0404

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN

USDOCOSOUTH

USEUCOM

USCINCEUR

DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 3811

DEPARTMENT PASS TO SECRETARY'S PARTY

BEIRUT FOR RCAA DWOR

3. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAIR, UR, CY, TU

SUBJECT: AEROFLOT OFFER TO CYPRUS AIRWAYS

1. GOC FONMIN CHRISTOPHIDES SPOKE TO ME OCTOBER 29 ON WHAT HE TERMED "A VERY SERIOUS MATTER". HE SAID THAT WITH NICOSIA AIRPORT CLOSED, CYPRUS AIRWAYS IS SWIFTLY GOING BROKE AND WILL SHORTLY HAVE TO BEGIN LAYING OFF THE BULK OF ITS 430 EMPLOYEES. TURKEY, AS USG AWARE, REFUSES TO CON-  
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SIDER ALLOWING A REOPENING OF NICOSIA AIRPORT UNDER PROPOSED

NEUTRAL UN/ICAO CONTROL, AND INSISTS ON JOINT MANAGEMENT. DURING HOSTILITIES, TURKISH FORCES FAILED IN THEIR ATTEMPT SEIZE AIRPORT. TURKEY CANNOT BE ALLOWED BLACKMAIL ITS WAY INTO A SHARE IN AIRPORT MANAGEMENT, FROM WHICH IT WOULD NEVER WITHDRAW ONCE IN.

2. IN PRESENT SITUATION, CHRISTOPHIDES CONTINUED, GOC BEING FORCED TO CONSIDER USE OF AN ALTERNATIVE, IMPROVISED LANDING STRIP TO REESTABLISH AIR COMMUNICATION WITH OUTSIDE WORLD. POSSIBILITIES ARE PAPHOS, LAKATAMIA OR LARNACA. GOC HAS DECIDED ON LARNACA AND WILL BEGIN IMMEDIATELY TO UPGRADE THE DIRT STRIP. UNFORTUNATELY, EVEN AFTER IMPROVEMENT IT WILL NOT BE USEABLE BY CYPRUS AIRWAYS' JETS (TRIDENTS). SMALL AIRCRAFT WITH SHORT TAKEOFF AND LANDING CAPABILITY WILL BE REQUIRED.

3. CLERIDES SAID USSR, THROUGH AEROFLOT, HAS SEIZED THIS STRATEGIC MOMENT AND CYPRUS AIRWAYS' DILEMMA TO PUT IN AN VERY ATTRACTIVE PROPOSAL OFFERING ANY KIND OF JOINT ARRANGEMENT WITH CYPRUS AIRWAYS TO ENABLE LATTER USE LARNACA AIRPORT AND THEREBY STAY SOLVENT. AEROFLOT HAS OFFERED APPROPRIATE EQUIPMENT, PILOT TRAINING, FINANCING, AND EVEN CUT-RATE FUEL AND LUBRICANTS.

4. CHRISTOPHIDES SHOWED ME TEXT OF AEROFLOT OFFER AND COMMENTED THAT IT VERY DIFFICULT TO REFUSE. HOWEVER, PRESIDENT CLERIDES AND HE OPPOSE CONCLUDING AN AGREEMENT WITH AEROFLOT, REALIZING THAT ACCEPTANCE WOULD INDEFINITELY MARRY CYPRUS AIRWAYS TO AEROFLOT WITH OBVIOUSLY UNDERSIRABLE LONG-RANGE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES. NEVERTHELESS, IF NICOSIA AIRPORT CANNOT BE REOPENED IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, PERMITTING RESUMPTION OF REGULAR CYPRUS AIRWAYS OPERATIONS, THERE WILL BE NO OTHER CHOICE. THEREFORE, GOC URGENTLY REQUESTING US ASSISTANCE IN WINNING TURKEY'S AGREEMENT TO REOPEN NICOSIA AIRPORT UNDER PROPOSED UN/ICAO CONTROL.

5. I REPLIED THAT USG, ALONG WITH UN AND UK, HAS INTERESTED ITSELF IN NICOSIA AIRPORT REOPENING. WE AGREE THAT THIS IS A PRIORITY MATTER. HOWEVER, IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING, AS GOC'S, THAT TURKEY REQUESTING JOINT MANAGEMENT. CONFIDENTIAL

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I WONDERED IF TO MEET TURKEY PART WAY IN TERMS OF REASSURING EVERYONE THAT AIRPORT NOT USED FOR MILITARY RESUPPLY GOC COULD AGREE TO ATTACHING A GREEK AND TURKISH OBSERVER TO UN'S AIRPORT MANAGEMENT TEAM. CHRISTOPHIDES SAID THIS POSSIBILITY HAD NOT BEEN ADDRESSED BY GOC. HE WAS SKEPTICAL BUT DID NOT EXCLUDE AGREEMENT IF OBSERVERS WERE (GREEK AND TURKISH) CYPRIOTS.

6. I NOTED CHRISTOPHIDES' REFERENCE TO REOPENING NICOSIA AIRPORT AS THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO ACCEPTING AEROFLOT OFFER. SURELY, AGREEMENT WITH A RELIABLE WESTERN AIRLINE WAS ANOTHER POSSIBILITY. CHRISTOPHIDES SAID THERE HAD BEEN CONTACTS WITH A BRITISH FIRM BUT WITH NO RESULT. I PROMISED INFORM MY GOVERNMENT OF HIS DEMARCHE BUT URGED THAT GOC STEP UP ITS EFFORTS TO INTEREST A NON-SOVIET BLOC AIRLINE.

7. I ALSO SUGGESTED THAT CHRISTOPHIDES REPEAT TO UK HIGH COMMISSIONER THE REMARKS HE HAD MADE TO ME. CRAWFORD

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